

over Rawlins in view of Monson, U.S. Pat. No. 5,689,418, and claims 8 and 26 as being unpatentable over Rawlins in view of Dietrich et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,630,070. The applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Rawlins discloses a method and apparatus that monitors crop quality in various areas of a field. A field (20) is divided into individual field sampling areas (22, 24), the locations of which are stored. A harvester (26) includes a global positioning system (28) and a dispenser (46) which dispenses crop markers (54). (See Col. 3, Line 45 to Col. 4, Line 59) When the harvester harvests the crop from a field sampling area, a crop marker is dispensed into the stream of the crop harvested from that particular field sampling area. The crop marker includes an identifier which is correlated to the location of the field sampling area from which the crop was harvested. (See Col. 5, Line 37 to Col. 7, Line 28.) When the harvested crop proximate to the crop marker is tested, the quality of the harvested crop can be correlated with the field sampling area from where the crop came. Thus, one can monitor crop quality in relation to field location and allocate resources to various field areas as necessary. Rawlins does not disclose or suggest a method or apparatus that determines possible offers to be made to farms to grow a crop of interest or that selects farms to receive an offer to grow a crop of interest as recited in independent claims 1 and 18.

The passages cited by the Office action as disclosing an offer developer or determining possible offers (i.e., Col. 5, Lines 49-66; Col. 6, Line 31-39) actually relate to storing field positions, determining the position of a

harvester, determining if there is a match between the stored field positions and the harvester position, dispensing a crop marker if there is a match and correlating the crop marker with the field position. There is absolutely no mention of an offer developer, determining possible offers to be made to farms, or selecting farms to receive any such offer in these or any other parts of Rawlins.

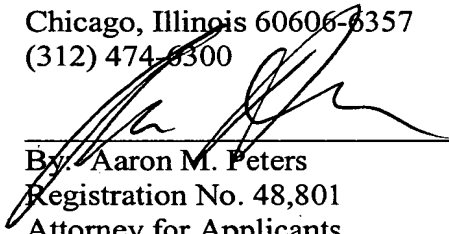
The remaining references, whether taken alone or in combination with Rawlins, also fail to teach the combination of independent claims 1 or 18. For example, Monson teaches a network that stores data concerning field conditions and correlates that data with maps to help determine what conditions produce maximum yields. In this regard, Monson is similar to Rawlins in that both relate to monitoring crop quality but do not relate to determining possible offers to be made to farms to grow a crop of interest, and thus claims 1 and 18 are patentable over Monson for the same reasons as explained in connection with Rawlins.

Dietrich et al. has nothing to do with farming, with determining possible offers to be made to farms to grow a crop of interest or with selecting farms to receive any such offer. Accordingly, not only is there no suggestion to combine Dietrich et al. with Rawlins, even if one did make such a combination one could not arrive at the recitation of claim 1 or 18. In view of these significant distinctions, claims 1, 18 and all claim depending therefrom should be allowed.

Accordingly, the applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are patentable over the art of record. In the light of the foregoing, the prompt issuance of a notice of allowance is respectfully solicited. Should there remain any questions, the examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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